FREE
SAMPLE CHAPTER

RUNNING THE BUSINESS ON PURPOSE

A MANAGER'S GUIDE TO
LEAD, CONTROL, AND IMPROVE
OPERATIONS EVERY DAY

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Running the Business on Purpose

A Manager's Guide to Lead, Control, and Improve Operations Every Day

A Sample Chapter and Executive Preview

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Welcome

Thank you for your interest in Running the Business on Purpose.

If you are like most leaders, managers, and supervisors, you face a constant challenge: turning expectations into results. You establish goals, communicate priorities, allocate resources, and develop plans, yet the outcomes often fall short of what was intended. Deadlines slip, priorities compete for attention, performance varies, and managers spend more time reacting to problems than preventing them.

Over the course of my career, I have worked with organizations of different sizes and across a variety of industries. Although their products, services, and missions were different, many struggled with the same fundamental issue: there was no consistent system for translating expectations into daily execution and measurable results. That observation led me to a simple conclusion: management itself must be treated as a process.

This idea echoes a principle from W. Edwards Deming that has shaped my own work: “If people do not see the process, they cannot improve it.” That principle applies not only to operational workflows, but to management itself. Running the Business on Purpose introduces the Management Operating System (MOS), a practical framework that helps leaders, managers, and supervisors create greater visibility, accountability, consistency, and control over daily operations.

In one case study inside the book, this approach helped a food-processing operation reduce labor costs by the equivalent of 5.5 full-time positions — with average weekly savings more than doubling, from $6,702 during the project to over $13,482 after it ended.

This preview includes the complete opening chapter of the book, followed by two shorter previews of Chapters 2 and 3 that show how the Management Operating System develops from concept to daily practice. As you read, you will see three levels of the book's message:

- The problem: why organizations drift when expectations, measures, follow-up, and accountability are not managed through a consistent process.
- The framework: how the Management Operating System connects planning, execution, follow-up, monitoring, reporting, and corrective action.
- The practice: how Daily Schedule Control helps managers compare planned work to actual progress and respond while there is still time to influence the outcome.

I invite you to read what follows with a simple question in mind:

Are we running the business, or is the business running us?

The answer may reveal opportunities to improve performance, strengthen accountability, and operate with greater purpose.

Sincerely,
Dr. Theodore N. Bibbes, MBA, DBA
Author, Running the Business on Purpose

Introduction: The Case for Daily Control

This chapter explains why daily operations require a structured management system. It defines control as aligning outcomes with expectations and introduces the Management Operating System (MOS) as a practical way to make management more visible, consistent, and actionable.

Management is a process. In many organizations, however, that process evolves informally as business grows rather than being deliberately designed and maintained. When this happens, measures, KPIs, reporting routines, and problem-solving practices often start varying across teams and functions. A disciplined MOS reduces that variability by defining how performance is measured, reviewed, and acted upon when results deviate from expectations.

A process is a structured, repeatable sequence of steps that turns **inputs** such as resources, data, and materials into measurable **outputs** through specific **activities**. Processes provide the “blueprint” for how work is done consistently and at scale, independent of individual style. They connect directly to workplace culture and management because culture shapes people's behaviors, while processes formalize what work is done and how it is controlled. When processes are misaligned with stated cultural values such as speed, quality, or safety, they create friction; when they are aligned, they reduce it. Processes also enable management control by making performance observable so that bottlenecks, variance, and constraints can be identified and addressed using data rather than guesswork.

A system is a set of interconnected parts (processes) that work together to achieve a common purpose; since they are interdependent, changes to one affect the whole structure. They are defined by their boundaries (what is inside versus outside the system), the interactions that create synergy, and the feedback loops that allow them to self-correct and adapt. In an organization, the “system” is the enterprise itself, processes are the structured workflows that convert inputs to outputs, culture is the shared set of norms that shape how people behave within those processes, and management is the coordinating function that aligns people, processes, and resources toward results. This matters in the MOS because it frames performance as a product of the system, making problems visible, traceable to causes, and improvable through disciplined, closed-loop control.

An MOS cannot be built from within the four walls of the conference room alone. The people doing the work understand the real process, its constraints, and its recurring problems. Their input makes activity lists more accurate, strengthens expectations, and makes controls more practical. It also builds ownership: when employees help shape the system, they are more likely to sustain it. Without that involvement, even a well-designed MOS can drift back toward uneven, subjective application.

A structured management process improves objectivity. Without one, leaders are more likely to rely on assumptions or isolated signals. For example, a supervisor may see that employees are starting work ten minutes late and assume this is the reason behind low output. However, when productivity, efficiency, and downtime are reviewed together, the data may reveal that the real issue is not employee start time but recurring material delays that prevent work from beginning on schedule. A sound MOS helps management identify variance accurately and respond to the right problem.

The full book explains the core elements of a practical MOS and how to apply them in daily operations. Its purpose is to help leaders use structured routines and tools to identify where attention is needed and respond more consistently.

For supervisors, managers, and executives, improvement is continuous. The primary objective of the MOS is to provide management with the information needed to control operations more effectively. By bringing irregularities to the surface quickly and linking them to follow-up and corrective action, the system helps leaders respond earlier and more consistently. The MOS is effective only when it is used consistently and with discipline at every level of management and supervision.

The Management Cycle and the Concept of Control

The **management cycle** is a continuous process for directing work toward organizational goals. It is commonly described through the **P-O-L-C framework**: Planning, Organizing, Leading, and Controlling. In this book, the MOS uses the related **P-E-F-M framework**: Planning sets direction, Execution puts plans into action, Follow-up checks progress and reinforces accountability, and Monitoring and reporting help management compare results to expectations and adjust as needed. The cycle matters because control is not a one-time event; it is the ongoing discipline of keeping work on track with the plan.

Control means making outcomes match expectations. Managers forecast demand, plan the work, execute, review results, and make adjustments when performance drifts. In practice, this requires balancing attention across future needs, current execution, and past results so that decisions are informed by both prediction and feedback.

Controls in management are distinguished by their timing and purpose, and they fall into three main categories:

- Feedforward (Proactive) Control: Occurs before an activity begins, focusing on preventing problems by ensuring inputs meet standards (e.g., hiring and training, supplier qualifications).
- Concurrent (Real-Time) Control: Happens during operations, allowing managers to monitor and correct deviations immediately (e.g., quality checks, supervisor oversight).
- Feedback (Reactive) Control: Takes place after activities are completed, using performance data to improve future actions (e.g., financial reports, customer surveys).

Effective management uses all three forms of control together, preventing problems where possible, correcting issues during execution, and learning from results afterward. Used together, they support timely action and continuous improvement.

The MOS Framework

Managers and supervisors carry many responsibilities, but the MOS is centered on four core functions: planning the work, executing the work, following up, and reporting results. Together, these functions create a repeatable management rhythm that connects expectations to daily action.

Planning

Planning establishes the goals, priorities, and resources needed to achieve them. It translates broader objectives into actionable work by clarifying what must be done, what capacity is available, and where constraints may interfere with execution.

Good planning also helps managers compare expected workload to available time, people, and capabilities. By making the elements the manager can control explicit, planning improves coordination, supports better decisions, and provides the baseline for later comparison to actual results.

Execution

Execution is the point at which plans become work. It requires employees to understand their roles, priorities, and performance expectations so that daily activities remain aligned with organizational goals.

Management supports execution by providing direction, resources, and oversight without removing accountability. The goal is not micromanagement; it is to provide clear expectations, timely support, and adequate visibility so management can address issues before they negatively affect performance.

When execution is disciplined, organizations can track progress, respond to obstacles quickly, and maintain performance standards on a daily basis.

Follow-up

Follow-up ensures that plans are carried out and progress is checked against expectations. It helps supervisors detect problems early, confirm the completion of tasks, and keep daily work aligned with the intended results. It also reinforces accountability and support. When supervisors stay engaged with the work, they can recognize strong performance, clarify expectations, and provide help where additional guidance or resources are needed.

In the MOS, follow-up connects the plan and the report. It documents progress, captures variance, and gives management the information needed to support corrective action and improvement.

Reporting

Effective management depends on timely, accurate reporting. Senior leaders cannot personally observe every part of the operation, so they rely on structured reporting to understand performance and make sound decisions.

Useful reports have a clear purpose, audience, and cadence. They highlight key measures, exceptions, and trends rather than overwhelming managers with raw data. In the MOS, a KPI should only appear on a report if it has a defined target and an agreed response when performance falls outside that target.

When reviewed consistently, reports help managers identify recurring issues, allocate resources more effectively, and adjust plans based on facts rather than assumptions.

Summary

This chapter identifies and establishes management as a process that must be deliberately designed, structured, and controlled. Without a defined system, organizations tend to drift toward inconsistency, weak alignment, and subjective decision-making. By defining control as the act of aligning outcomes with expectations, management becomes a visible, measurable discipline. This chapter emphasizes that a sustainable MOS requires both leadership discipline and employee involvement. Leaders must use the system consistently, while employees must help shape it so that expectations and controls reflect how work is actually accomplished. Together, these ideas position the MOS as a practical foundation for objective decision-making, daily control, and continuous improvement.

In the full book: The next chapter builds on this foundation by presenting the Management Operating System as a complete, closed-loop system. It explains how expectations are translated into daily action through defined phases, roles, and responsibilities, connecting strategic intent to operational execution.

Executive Preview: Chapters 2 and 3

Chapter 1 establishes the foundation for the book by defining management as a process and control as the discipline of aligning actual results with expected results. The two short previews below give you a taste of where the book goes next — not the full chapters, but enough to show how the ideas take shape as a practical, usable system.

Preview of Chapter 2: The Management Operating System

Chapter 2 expands the idea of control into a complete operating model. If Chapter 1 explains why daily control matters, Chapter 2 begins to show how that control is created. The Management Operating System is presented as a practical framework for converting expectations into planned work, planned work into execution, execution into follow-up, and follow-up into monitoring, reporting, corrective action, and improvement.

The MOS at a Glance

At its core, the Management Operating System answers four basic questions:

- What is expected?
- What work must be done to meet those expectations?
- How will we know whether the work is on track?
- What will we do when actual results do not match the plan?

These questions may appear simple, but many organizations struggle because they are not answered consistently. The MOS closes these gaps by creating a repeatable process for managing the business — a disciplined way to compare what should be happening with what is actually happening, and then act on the difference.

The Closed-Loop Model

A closed-loop system begins with an expectation and ends with learning. In the MOS, management does not stop when work begins or when a report is issued — it continues through execution, follow-up, monitoring, reporting, corrective action, and the adjustment of future plans. Chapter 2 walks through six connected practices that make up this loop:

- **Forecasting** — anticipating the work before it arrives
- **Planning** — converting expectations into intentional action
- **Execution** — putting the plan into daily action
- **Follow-up** — checking progress while there is still time to act
- **Monitoring & Evaluating** — comparing actual results to expected results
- **Reporting** — communicating what requires attention

The power of the MOS is in the connection between these practices. Skip one and the loop breaks: planning without execution leaves expectations unrealized, execution without follow-up allows drift, evaluation without reporting keeps insight isolated. When the full loop is engaged, management becomes more objective, more consistent, and far less dependent on individual habits or assumptions — which is what allows an organization to run the business on purpose.

Chapter 2 walks through each of these six practices in detail, showing what strong and weak versions of each look like in daily operations.

Preview of Chapter 3: Daily Schedule Control

Chapter 3 moves the Management Operating System from concept to daily execution. A system cannot create control unless managers have a practical way to see whether the day is unfolding as planned. Daily Schedule Control provides that visibility by comparing planned work to actual progress throughout the day, identifying variance early, and supporting corrective action while there is still time to affect the outcome.

In many organizations, schedules are created but not controlled: priorities shift, delays occur, and management often discovers a problem only after the opportunity to correct it has passed. Daily Schedule Control closes that gap through short-interval follow-up — checking progress at defined points during the day rather than waiting until the shift, day, or week is over — so that variance becomes a signal to investigate rather than a surprise to explain.

Daily Schedule Control Example

Assume a customer service department expects to process 160 requests during the day. Based on historical volume, available staffing, and required service levels, the manager builds a daily schedule that expects 40 requests to be completed by 10:00 a.m., 80 by noon, 120 by 2:30 p.m., and 160 by the end of the day.

At the 10:00 a.m. follow-up point, the team has completed only 28 requests instead of the planned 40 — a variance of 12 requests behind schedule. Because the manager is using Daily Schedule Control, the gap is visible early rather than being discovered at the end of the day. A brief review shows that several requests required additional information from another department, creating waiting time for two employees. The problem is not employee effort; it is a schedule constraint caused by delayed information.

What the manager does next — and how much of the gap gets recovered by noon — is where Chapter 3 picks up.

The purpose of Daily Schedule Control is simple: keep the day visible while there is still time to influence the outcome.

About the Author

Dr. Theodore N. Bibbes, MBA, DBA is a business process improvement expert, author, and consultant who helps organizations improve performance by understanding and managing the processes that shape daily work. He is the author of Running the Business on Purpose, a practical guide to helping leaders build a disciplined Management Operating System that connects strategy, planning, execution, measurement, reporting, and follow-up.

With more than two decades of experience across government, higher education, healthcare, and service organizations, Dr. Bibbes has helped leaders transform complex operational problems into clear, manageable processes. Before founding **TNB BPM Consulting, LLC**, he led the Process Improvement Program for the Governor's Office of Customer Service for the State of Georgia, where he directed Lean implementations across multiple state agencies and helped improve service quality, processing times, and long-term performance.

Dr. Bibbes earned his Doctorate in Business Administration from Georgia State University, where his research focused on the relationship between project management and knowledge creation. His work explores how leaders turn information, experience, and insight into action that produces measurable results.

At the core of his philosophy is a simple belief: **Everything is a process.** He argues that many organizational challenges, including missed deadlines, rising costs, employee frustration, and inconsistent customer experiences, can often be traced back to processes that were never clearly defined, measured, or managed. By focusing on processes rather than blame, he helps organizations build trust, transparency, accountability, and sustainable improvement.

Dr. Bibbes lives and works in Alpharetta, Georgia, where he consults, teaches, writes, and speaks on process excellence, problem-solving, and organizational effectiveness. To learn more about his work, visit **www.tnbbpmconsulting.com**.

Take the Next Step: The MOS Maturity Assessment

Curious how your organization's current practices compare to what you just read? Take the free MOS Maturity Assessment for a personalized report on where you already have strong daily discipline — and where the biggest opportunities are hiding. It takes about 10–15 minutes.

Run the business on purpose. Start by understanding where you are today.

Scan the code below to begin or visit the link if you're reading this on the device you'd like to use.

The Management Operating System Assessment

https://forms.cloud.microsoft/r/6XuhTYHgtW

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Running the Business on Purpose is scheduled for release in September 2026 on Amazon and other major book retailers, available in hardcover, paperback, and eBook.

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If the ideas in this sample chapter resonate with you, I invite you to visit www.tnbbpmconsulting.com to learn more about my work, upcoming book updates, and resources for improving organizational performance.

You may also contact me by email at tnbibbes@tnbbpmconsulting.com to discuss consulting, speaking, workshops, or how the Management Operating System approach may apply to your organization.